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Editor's Notes

Like most of us, when shopping for groceries I try to make healthful choices. By reading package labels, many additives and high fat content foods can be avoided. But what about the produce section? Here there is little, if any, packaging. Nothing which tells us of the pesticides and chemical fertilizers that have been used in the growing of these fruits and vegetables. And the effects of their residue after consumption.

By definition pesticides are chemicals toxic to insects, weeds, and unwanted pests. As these chemicals can also be absorbed by humans through the skin, inhalation or ingested they pose a serious threat to our health. Problems ranging from birth defects to nerve damage have been reported to be a result of pesticide exposure.

In this issue, we hope to provide information which can help you make more informed choices, and show you a few steps you can take to reduce your exposure to pesticides, such as buying organically grown produce. If consumer demand for *safer* foods was greater, it would force farmers to look at alternative ways of producing their crops, such as integrated pest management.

We are pleased to announce the opening of a new branch in Manitoba. Colleen Pawlychka, the branch president, has been working hard getting the branch up and running as well as promoting the AEHA issues in her area. You can read all about it on page seven. Thanks Colleen!

Also, please take special notice of the upcoming Annual General Meeting to be held June 6 & 7, 1997 in Moncton, New Brunswick. Details are on page 20. We look forward to seeing many of our members there.

Daphne Viau-Holland

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The Allergy and Environmental Health Association (AEHA) does not offer medical advice and we urge persons wishing to expenment with changes in lifestyle to do so with the help and guidance of a knowledgeable health care practitioner. All products and services mentioned in this publication should be carefully evaluated for personal compatibility.

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Cover Story

Pesticides

We conclude our 3 part series with the following articles

The Case Against Pesticides
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by Micheal P. Milburn
A debate over the risks of chemical pesticides.

Pesticides or Us
Page 27
by Katharine Auslander
The story of how Canada's largest city was driven to change their use of Pesticides

Pesticides in My Home
Page 29
by Paul Battle
A look at how Pesticides invade our living space and how to overcome them.

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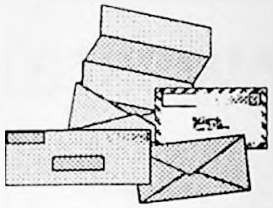
Letters

Your Opportunity to Speak Out



THANKS FOR THE CORRECTION

Have been following your newsletter "UPdate" and I find it most interesting and informative. Keep up the good work! I want to draw to your attention, however, that you have been misspelling Dr.John G. Maclennan's name. I feel this should be corrected and that you would want to keep your records correct. Wishing you continued success with the paper.

Miss F. Jean Mills
Hamilton, Ontario

HOW MUCH CAN YOU GET FROM ONE ISSUE?

It is unusual for me to get three pieces of information that give insights into my physical problems from a single edition of any publication, namely: Roger Lewis, "Canthaxanthin" - deposits in their eyes. Also, AM EMF Story by K. Auslander. The entire article helped to justify the purchase of a 150 year old farmhouse. The reflective aluminum insulation, outdoor groundrods and PVC pipe from the well, have been beneficial without my knowing of it and will be kept in mind should I ever get the chance to move away. "Porphyria" by Linda A. Thompson described symptoms and their causes that have been the reason that I have lived in increasing isolation since 1973. Just finding out that others have these problems is a comfort. My doubting spouse is becoming accepting of my weirdness. Thank you, all

Murdiva M. Oldfield
Warkworth, Ontario

I would like to thank you for the wonderful article in the last newsletter called, My Success, it was a great help to myself as well as my sister. She has been very sick lately and the doctors are puzzled to what is the matter. The article gave her a new avenue to look down. We both had no previous knowledge of environmental disease and this article was a great insight.

Again, thank you from both of us.

Wendy Paquette,
Dartmouth, NS

WHAT *WAS* SAID?

Even before I was diagnosed with Candida and Environmental Sensitivity I was on a low fat, high fibre diet. The comment from Mr. Milburn that "...to eat a high fibre, low-fat diet is not a lot of work..." is irresponsible. Just the learning process and the effort needed to create a new habit are a lot of work.

His next comment "I always tell people there is no half way" is totally lacking in understanding of human nature. Very few people can change habits of a life time overnight and when you include the fact that in a family not all individuals have the same commitment for the required change it can be nearly impossible.

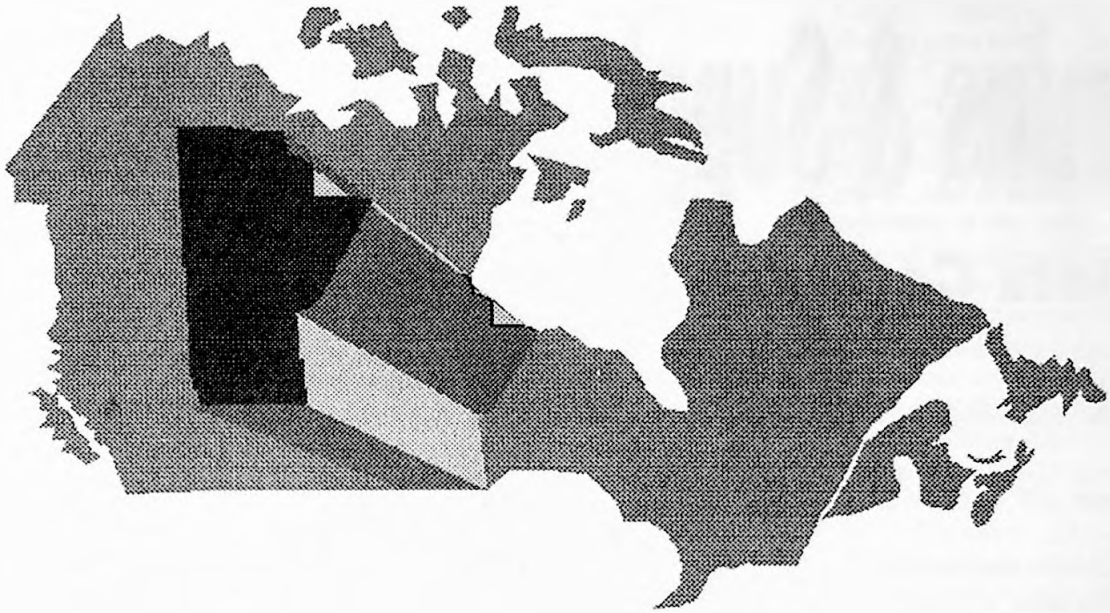
Also, I noticed in the fall issue that NS might get a "Labour Legislation on Indoor Air Quality." Do you know if other provinces have such legislation? If so, do you know where to get a copy?

Diane Bergeron
Gagetown, NB

Editor's note

Mr. Milburn does not say the learning process and the effort to create a new habit is not a lot of work. What he has said is that the comparison of preparation time for the foods found in the Standard American Diet is no more than that of a low fat, high fibre diet. (Page 23 Paragraph 8, Winter/97 UPdate)

Unfortunately, the changing of lifestyles and lifelong habits are a lot of work. Those who have been inflicted with EI cannot undertake these lightly.



MANITOBA BRANCH OPENS!

The year 1997 has begun and the Prairies are in full swing! AEHA Manitoba, the newest branch of AEHA has now been officially opened and has joined the battle against allergies, asthma and environmental/chemical sensitivities.

Citizens have just begun to be more vocal due to deterioration of health and lack of concern by our officials. Citizens' voice objection to aerial application of Roundup and we have banded together to find ways to inform others of integrated pest management as an alternative to chemicals in our own "back yards". Newspapers run articles expressing "concern" over the loss of masses of bees due to increased use of pesticides. Citizens prepare to lobby in favour of alternative health care. Parents are joining in attempts to reduce the overload of toxins dumped onto and into our children through their school environments. Railway ties emitting creosote, particle board and paints emitting a multitude of toxic chemicals and carpeting not only emitting these but also acting as a sink for the toxic moulds and dust mites are no longer acceptable in our schools and workplaces. Even golfers are joining the ranks and are supporting golf courses which have turned from the "golf-course syndrome" to healthier maintenance practices. New health stores are opening and existing stores are expanding to meet the need for safer and healthier foods, dietary supplements and products.

AEHA Manitoba has been welcomed into the community by donations of resources and funds, formation of allies with well established associations and even receiving discounts at some local health stores. AEHA Manitoba has been encouraged to forge on ahead and this is apparent from the overwhelming number of members who have joined.

Concern and awareness regarding our health is growing, however, there are m any huge obstacles and strong barriers which we must overcome. The informational highways established by AEHA Canada are paramount as we tackle the important and complex task of increasing the awareness of the link between our environment and our health.

I have much optimism and look forward to working together with AEHA Canada, the various provincial AEHA branches and our many members as we strive for better health.

Colleen L. Pawlychka
President, AEHA Manitoba

Vitamins & Supplements

The Beta Carotene Controversy

Roger Lewis, C.H.

Part 3 of 4 The Toxicity of Cigarette Smoke

Disclaimer: *The following information is for educational purposes. It is neither diagnostic nor prescriptive in nature or intent.*

Introduction

This essay is not an exhaustive list of the toxic effects of cigarette smoke. It is intended to present some of the issues related specifically to lung cancer and antioxidants. Tobacco smoking claims one in seven lives. It kills so many people every year that as of 1993 in the USA, it surpassed the combined sum of annual deaths related to car accidents, fire, murder, heroin, crack, cocaine, alcohol, and AIDS. The primary toxic components of cigarette smoke are often divided into two categories, the Gas-Phase and the Particulate-Phase (Tar) Radicals. Basically, the smoke cools down once inside the body, condensing into particles of tar. Cigarette smoke contains over 3,000 compounds, such as almost every type of *"...aliphatic and aromatic hydrocarbons, including alkanes, alkenes, alkynes, ketones, aldehydes, acids, alcohols, esters, ethers, phenols, alkaloids, steroids, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, various oxygen-centered heterocyclic compounds, nitrogen, sulfur, and toxic metals."* The levels of cadmium, lead, and flouride in cigarette smoke all *"...exceed limits considered acceptable for exposure..."*, and smoke *"...often approaches up to 1000 ppm..."* of hydrogen cyanide, while *"...long term exposure to 10 ppm is considered dangerous."* Bluntly put, long term exposure to cigarette smoke is the major cause of lung cancer, and other lung diseases, in addition to heart disease. It has been well documented as the single most important common pollutant responsible for altering *"...the growth patterns of the respiratory epithelia..."*, often leading to *"Lung Epithelial Metaplasia"* (lung cancer). The Particulate-Phase (Tar) Radicals are largely *"...polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons such as benzo(a)pyrene, which can be metabolized to reactive carcinogenic derivatives by detoxicative MFO enzymes in the lung (as well as in the liver)."* It is specifically these *"...reactive carcinogenic derivatives..."* which could be major factors in the new Beta Carotene - Cigarette Smoke - Lung Cancer connection, presuming of course that such a connection exists.

The Danger Of A Slow MFO

The Mixed Function Oxidase (MFO) enzyme system is both a lung and a liver function, largely responsible for getting rid of poisonous chemicals in the body, whether they be foreign pollutants or natural metabolites. So the usual path of detoxification of smoke and tar includes sending the partially detoxified by-products to the liver. Perhaps in some cases the liver is functioning sluggishly or otherwise defectively because of the high degree of saturation with Beta Carotene, or any number of factors which could impede liver function. These phase two detoxification by-products are considered toxic enough to cause irreversible lung damage in only three minutes if not detoxified by the MFO enzyme system. This is an area where the presence of other antioxidants, especially Vitamin C, might be a crucial factor. The specific damage in question is genetic, increasing the possibility that this mechanism is at least partially involved in cancer growth. It is not difficult to imagine a situation where the serum binding proteins responsible for delivering Beta Carotene to the site of the lung cells could play a negative dual role when combined with a second phase over circulating detoxification by-product of smoke and tar. The result could be a special delivery system for the potentially deadly chemical combination. In any case, a wholistic detoxification regime theoretically should begin with "drainage" of the toxins, usually involving a mild but substantive increase in bowel movements and urine flow, both in terms of volume and with respect to the amount of toxins excreted. Great care should be taken to avoid the "cleansing crises" associated with detoxifying too quickly. It is vital for consumers and practitioners alike to realize the highly professional

nature of decisions involved in determining how quickly or slowly a particular individual should detoxify.

Dual Free Radical Problem And More

Pryor believes that the major Free Radical Species from cigarette smoke tar particles is a natural by-product of the tobacco leaf pigment (colour). Specifically *"...melanin-type quinone/semi-quinone/hydroquinone polymers derived from the polyphenols."* These in turn may act as *"...co-carcinogens for the other carcinogens present in cigarette smoke"* because they can participate in a redox cycle whereby they donate electrons to molecular oxygen to make activated oxygen species. Consequently, cigarette smoke has two mechanisms of destruction via free radicals, making it extra carcinogenic, because it has *"...both oxidant and reductant radical constituents."* Interestingly, Beta Carotene is itself a plant pigment, and many such pigments possess toxic and/or healing properties. One well accepted theory is that plants developed carotenoid pigments, known as polyprenes, as a form of natural immunity against the harsh effects of the sun. This is supported by the fact that all known plants with chlorophyll contain polyprenes, which protect the plant from the oxidation created when the sunlight degrades chlorophyll into singlet oxygen free radicals. Additionally, smoking damages other organs, such as via the lipid peroxidation of the enzyme responsible for making prostacyclin, a protective prostaglandin found in the arterial endothelia of probably all organs. The enzyme in question has been shown to be *"...readily inactivated by exposure to cigarette smoke constituents."*

Radioactive Soil And/Or Roots

Scarier still is the fact that tobacco is *"...grown by law in soil fertilized with radioactive materials."* The effect on the lungs of smoking one and one-half packs of cigarettes per day for one year has been shown in USA government studies to be *"...the equivalent of what some 300 chest x-rays (using the old, slow x-ray film and without using any lead protection) are to your skin."* Unlike the immediately dissipating radiation of an x-ray, the radioactive half-life of tobacco in the lungs is *"...21.5 years."* Perhaps the single most famous proclamation of tobacco's toxicity went virtually unreported, when former USA Surgeon General C. Everett Koop announced on national television in 1990 that radioactivity is probably to blame for the majority of tobacco related cancers. I remember a report from the Globe & Mail shortly afterwards where the estimated rate of cancers related to tobacco's radioactivity is well over 90%. Strangely however, the report indicated that the radioactivity was due to a natural, unique radioactive isotope found primarily in the root. No mention was made of farming techniques involving radioactive soil treatments.

Nitrogen Dioxide: Poison

Additionally, it is important to understand the highly destructive role of the chemical nitric oxide, which converts quickly into the more toxic nitrogen dioxide. Nitrogen dioxide and other chemicals *"...impair the MFO function, which is highly lipid dependent."* One antioxidant researcher, Chow, remarks that *"...nitrogen dioxide can reach 250 ppm in cigarette smoke..."*, yet lab animals exposed to as little as 1 ppm experienced *"...irreversible lung damage"*. Pryor believes that it is a *"...steady-state replenisher of the oxygen-centered radicals in the airways."* Another study by both Pryor and Church led to the conclusion that nitrogen dioxide in cigarette smoke was responsible for the *"...loss of alpha-1-proteinase inhibitor in the lung..."* with respect to emphysematous tissue degeneration. Other studies confirm that cigarette smoke creates a chronic inflammatory state in the lungs, where the immune system is always working overtime with special proteolytic enzymes normally meant to quell inflammation. The smoker's lungs quickly become exhausted of the special natural inhibitor drug needed to shut off the proteolytic enzyme alpha-1-proteinase, which then continues to work beyond the point of usefulness, and actually destroys healthy tissue. This is the basic chemistry of marinades, i.e. an enzymatic destruction of cross-linked proteins. Also, nitrogen dioxide in cigarette smoke suppresses immune function by impairing cell-mediated defenses in the lung by *"...damaging the ability of phagocytic cells to ingest and kill their prey..."*, and is suspected to have a variety of other negative, albeit subtle effects, on other immune cells and body systems.

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The Beta Carotene Controversy

Roger Lewis, C.H.

Part 4 of 4 Dietary Sources
The Conclusion of a 4 Part Series on Beta Carotene

Disclaimer: *The following information is for educational purposes. It is neither diagnostic nor prescriptive in nature or intent.*

Introduction: Common Dietary Sources

Commonly listed dietary sources of the two nutrients are usually general and short, so I have had some difficulty collecting details, but suffice it to say that the primary vegetable sources of Beta Carotene are as follows: carrots, sweet potatoes, yams, broccoli, spinach, collards, turnip greens, kale, canteloupe, winter squash, squash in general, most greens, mustard greens, beet greens, papayas, mangoes, peaches, pink grapefruit, V-8-like vegetable juices, apricots, watermelons, tomatoes, lettuce (especially Bib). The main source of preformed Vitamin A in the diet is fish liver oil, meats, and animal products. One-half pound of calf's liver contains 75,000 I.U. of Vitamin A, while the average carrot has 5,000 I.U. of Beta Carotene. A sweet potato has approximately 10,000 I.U. of Beta Carotene. Approximately 90% of our our Vitamin A "requirement" (which hasn't really been conclusively established) comes from plants. Using a calculator and lots of patience, it appears that the semi-officially sort of recommended daily intake of Beta Carotene is 5.2 to 6 mg, or approximately 9,000 to 10,000 I.U., plus the additional Vitamin A from animal products. Vegetarians may need to compensate for the lack of animal products, but they are probably already getting far more carotenoids than the average person. The older data from agencies such as the FDA, where the RDA is 5,000 I.U. of Vitamin A, are considered largely outdated and irrelevant.

TABLE ONE: Ranking/Fruit Or Vegetable/Pounds Per Capita/Mg Of Carotene Per Capita Per Year

1. Carrots - 9.4 lbs. - 256 mg
2. Sweet Potatoes/Yams - 4.5 lbs. - 122 mg
3. Tomatoes - 37.8 lbs. - 85.8 mg
4. Melons - 20.2 lbs. - 62.2 mg
5. Spinach - 1.3 lbs. - 35.4 mg
6. Lettuces - 26 lbs. - 23.6 mg
7. Sweet Corn - 14.7 lbs. - 16 mg
8. Cabbage/Sauerkraut - 9 lbs. - 12.2 mg
9. Broccoli - 4 lbs. - 10.2 mg
10. Peas - 4.2 lbs. - 9.6 mg
11. Oranges - 29.7 lbs. - 6.7 mg
12. Snap Beans - 7.4 lbs. - 4.7 mg
13. Winter Squash - 0.6 lbs. - 4.6 mg
14. Nectarines - 1.5 lbs. - 3.4 mg
15. Bananas - 22.2 lbs. - 3 mg
16. Bell Peppers - 3.2 lbs. - 2.9 mg
17. Apricots - 0.5 lbs - 2.5 mg
18. Apples - 20.8 lbs. - 1.9 mg

Interpreting The Data

Although tomatoes are rather low in Beta Carotene content, the average consumption of tomatoes is four times that of carrots, so they are both similarly important. Likewise, lettuce is very low, but we eat so much of it that is considered a vital source. Other main sources are the previously mentioned sweet potato, spinach, and canteloupe. Really, the canteloupe is the only significant fruit source of Beta Carotene, with fruit in general possessing very low levels of carotenoids. The USA Department of Agriculture constructed a table showing the contributions of fruits and vegetables to Beta Carotene intake for 1983-84, shown above in Table One. Notice that only one pound of spinach yearly is more Beta Carotene than 26 pounds of lettuce. A half pound of apricots has over 25% more carotene than over 20 pounds of apples. This data does not incorporate the various losses of nutrients in cooking, shipping, etc., but hopefully this chart will allow people to adjust their diets accordingly (me too).

To The Rescue?

You will be especially impressed now to discover that the USA government is actively researching the development of genetically designed superfoods with, for example, high levels of Beta Carotene. One of the key advisors to the government in this regard was James Duke, the recently retired, well respected spokesperson for both the government and the American Botanical Council (ABC). Similar to the newly invented combination of a cauliflower and broccoli, the Broccoflower, the idea is basically to provide consumers with power veggies. One suggestion has been to bolster those foods we know we eat tons of, but which are notoriously low in carotenoids, such as oranges, bananas, and tomatoes. It probably would not work as easily with potatoes, because the edible part is underground. Note that the average American currently only consumes 2,500 I.U. of Beta Carotene daily, approximately one-quarter of the dose commonly recommended for basic health maintenance. The USA National Cancer Institute (NCI) suggests two servings daily, eg. carrots, is considered equivalent to approximately 9,000 I.U. to 10,000 I.U., although I would personally

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like to know how cooking affects these statistics (cooking and light destroy Beta Carotene and Vitamin A at least to some extent). A large study conducted with hundreds of nurses showed that those who ate 5 or more servings of carrots weekly had a 68% lower risk for stroke than those who ate only one serving monthly. So most people would probably benefit greatly from increased nutrients, which arguably replace much of what gets lost in the agricultural run-off, cooking, and so on.

Carrot Juice Move Over

Unraveling the Beta Carotene story reminds me of the musings of my father, who often compared annoying everyday experiences to the unwanted job of picking fly excrement out of pepper jars while wearing boxing gloves. Ironically, a Vitamin A rich, prized Chinese medicine for eye diseases is well dried Vespertilionum Faeces (Yeh-Ming-Sha, Ye-Ming-Sha), a.k.a. bat dung. The Materia Medica in question remarks that *"...the name implies that since bats eats mosquitoes and gnats, their feces are full of the eyes of these insects which shine at night."* Take your pick of either one of two different bats, the *Vespertilio superans Thomas (Vespertilionidae)* or the *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum Schreber (Rhinolophidae)*. Not surprisingly, it is listed as possessing a *"...pungent flavour..."*, and interestingly, it is associated with the *"...liver meridian..."*. It supposedly *"...clears heat, cleanses liver, clears vision, invigorates blood circulation..."*, has a *"...cold property..."*, and is used *"...for nebula, nyctalopia, malnutrition, and convulsions in infants..."*, all of which are notable symptoms of Vitamin A deficiency associated primarily with malnutrition. Its main ingredient is the Vitamin A, and it is used similarly to Rabbit poop (I guess the carrots just get processed). Other ingredients listed as occurring Bat Dung are *"...urea, uric acid, phosphates, potassium nitrate..."*. The dose for nyctalopia (night blindness) and ulcer of the cornea is a tasty *"...2.5 grams to 9 grams daily..."*. Bat dung and rabbit turds are notably absent from Table One.

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Organic vs. Conventional Farming

Rupert Jannasch, B.Sc., M.Sc.

For years, the availability of organic food in Canada has been hampered by inconsistent supplies and the inability of the food distribution system to place products from small organic famrers on the shelves of large supermarkets. Although the situation is slowly improving, Canadian consumers and farmers would benefit from a look at Danish agriculture where over the past few years, organic food has become available in nearly all supermarkets.

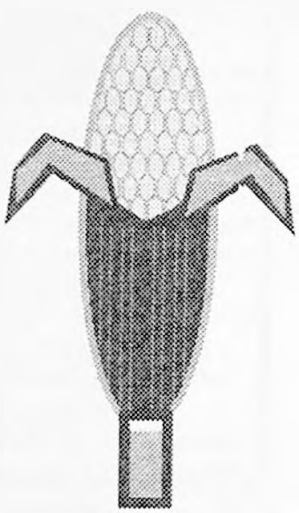
In 1992, Danish organic farmers faced a stagnant market and declining prices. However, a doubling in the total volume of fresh organic products in both 1993 and 1994 meant that 4% of the Danish domestic food market was being served by organic food. Today the figure is much higher.

Surprisingly, the rapid expansion was not precipitated by consumer demand, but by farmers who converted to organic husbandry. With support from agriculutral authorities and conventional processors and retailers, organic farmers overcame the fundamental problem of distributing food from small farms through a highly centralized food system dominated by several supermarket chains.

Like Canada, there are strong philosophical differences between conventional and organic farmers which make the cooperation necessary for a shared food system difficult. But progress has been made. For example, many organic farmers belong to conventional farm organizations and the advisory services for organic farmers are run by conventional farmer's unions. The Danish food distribution system, however, was until recently, dominated by those who oppose the views of organic farmers and conventional food firms were reluctant to sell organic products.

Organic agriculture was given a huge boost in the late 1980's by way of a publicly funded pilot program designed to promote organic production. Farmers' extra expenses were subsidized during the first two years of converion to organic practices, a certification system for organic farms was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, and research and development costs were subsidized. Of the modest $22 million in public expenditures made over a five year period, one third was paid as conversion subsidies while the remaining funds were spent on research and development.

The combination of the increased production advanced by subsidies, the guarantee of organic products by way of a state run certification program and public support of marketing initiatives provided organic agriculture with the broad base of support it needed for long term development. However, the inability of organic farmers to progress past formulatinig organic production methods to the development of innovative marketing strategies hindered further expansion. Organic farms are generally smaller, more diversified and produce less volume of a given product than conventional farms. Conventional distributors find them more time consuming and unpredictable to deal with than larger, more specialized, conventional farms.



A breakthrough came about 1990 when a small private wholesaler began presenting organic vegetables using conventional marketing techniques such as washing and transparent packaging. As supermarkets began promoting organic vegetables as top quality products sales increases were dramatic and prompted price reductions for organic food. As sales improved, so did the wholesalers' tolerance for small organic suppliers.

In the case of milk, conflict arose between a large manufacturer attempting to persuade large, conventional milk producers to convert to organic husbandry, and

several small organic dairies which claimed the larger company was trying to squeeze them out of business. Happily, the dispute was resolved and in the meantime the domestic market shjare for organic milk is expected to increase to 15% by 1998.

In an 1986 survey, 30% of Danish consumers were prepared to purchase organic food at a premium of 25%. By 1994, this share had increased to 54%. However, the total market share of organic food in 1994 was stuck at 4%. Studies revealed that price reductions advertized in stores would increase sales. One large supermarket chain advertized "green discount" prive cuts of 15-20% with such success that sales continued rising for the next two years. Notably, the sales increase was only made possible by having a reliable production and distribution established beforehand.

Price premiums for organic products still exist in Denmark, but sales continue to rise. Organic agriculture is flourishing and many of the traditional barriers between conventional and organic agriculture are being broken down. At the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements held in in Copenhagen in the summer of 1996, the Danish Minister of the Environment, Svend Auken, set a goal of 15-20% market share for organic food by the year 2000. Hopefully other countries, such as Canada, can learn by example and take similar initiatives to support organic agriculture. Everyone will benefit.

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Success Stories

"A house built - a life saved"

This Issue's Contributor: Flora Campbell

A Series On How Our Members Have Successfully Managed Their Illness

Right now, there is a debate raging among the so-called experts as to whether or not Multiple Chemical Sensitivity is a legitimate illness. So while they debate, those of us who have Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, turn our attention to trying to conquer an illness still not regarded as legitimate. Since it is still being debated, there are no government programs in Ontario set up to help us; and we fall between the cracks of the existing programs.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (in my opinion) can go two ways:

1. There can be full recovery of health, if adequate treatment is received on time; or

2. it is degenerative; it can disable; and it can be fatal. By the time I was diagnosed in March 1988, I had become disabled and I was near death. My doctor didn't think I was going to make it

The keys to my recovery are: pure water, pure food, and pure air -- the basis of human existence. Treatment methods for rebuilding the chemically damaged immune system will not be effective unless these three needs are met.

To achieve the key of pure water, I need to live in the country. This way chlorinated water is avoided completely. I learned through trial and error that filtering out the chlorine isn't sufficient (even the vapour makes my nose bleed). Therefore, well water is used for bathing, dishes, laundry, etc. However, I use distilled water for drinking and cooking because it is difficult to know what contaminants, if any, are in the water table.

Pure food is achieved by eating only 100% organically produced foods. Although I have no food allergies, all my food must be free of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, etc. I have to be very strict on this. Free range eggs may sound healthy, but if they are not 100% organic, I will experience extremely severe abdominal cramps.

Of all the keys to success, pure air is the most difficult to achieve. Everything outgasses. This poses a great problem as we live in a chemical and synthetic age. The vapours of our possessions, homes, vehicles, etc. fill the air and form a chemical soup which we breathe. My body says "No Way!" and shuts down. My breathing becomes shallow and my pulse very rapid. My nervous system becomes affected, and my muscles will jerk. My left side often goes numb. My muscles lose all strength, with my legs sometimes refusing to bear my weight. I become very tired and lethargic and have no energy to do even the simplest of tasks. Things progress from bad to worse until I get into a pure air environment.

To achieve pure air, I have changed my entire wardrobe, all my possessions and my way of life. Still, some chemicals are very difficult to avoid and pose a gigantic challenge. I need to be approximately ten miles away from pesticide or herbicide spraying; unfortunately in the cities and villages people spray their lawns; and in the country, farmers spray their fields. I also need to be approximately two miles from fresh asphalt; but each summer, roads are paved or patched.

I need to completely avoid formaldehyde because it is my worst sensitivity. Many things contain it, including most modern building supplies -- drywall, chipboard, particle board, plywood, carpets, etc. Therefore even my house has to be specially made.

The spring of 1991 was when I learned that I needed a special house. I went to the provincial and federal governments for assistance. Both informed me they could not help. My families were unable to help. There was no visible means of help. I prayed to God for help. In the Bible, one of God's names is Jehovah Jireh, which means, "The Lord will Provide." I prayed to God with tears that He would provide a house for me.

My health was spiraling downwards and I was fighting for my life. A friend, Eric Preston, was witnessing my plight and decided to get involved and help. He cashed in his RRSP and used that money as a downpayment on a house for me. In October 1991, Eric bought a 160 year old log house in a rural municipality that had a by-law which prohibited roadside pesticide spraying. In so doing, he literally saved my life. Although he lived and worked in a community an hour away, he spent weekends and many evenings renovating the house so it would meet my needs.

The summer of 1992 was spent testing building products to learn what my body could tolerate. The product to be tested was placed on a plate beside my pillow. Then I slept beside it all night to see whether or not I would react to it. If we were highly suspicious of it, the test would only be conducted for 15 to 30 minutes mid-afternoon when Eric was present.

Then Eric took that information, and in the summer of 1993 he built an addition to the house. It was all very expensive and labour intensive. For example, the vapour barrier is galvanized steel sheet. Every piece of steel has to be washed three times on both sides to remove an oil film. Each washing takes about ten minutes which adds up to one hour for each piece of steel. He built four washing trays so that four pieces could be washed at one time.

The addition was an experimental room that could be expanded if the experiment worked. The experiment definitely worked! If was the best room in the house and became my bedroom. Bit by bit my health was beginning to recover.

Then in June 1994, the municipal government, who were very aware of my chemical sensitivities and of what Eric had done for me, decided to spray herbicides on the ball diamond that was about 200 feet from my house - even though they hadn't previously sprayed it. This erased two and a half years of improvement in my health. Once again, I was fighting for my life. Eric appealed to the municipal government not to spray any more. He met with a stone wall.

Consequently, all the money, time, energy, and labour that Eric had put into this house was rendered invalid. If my life was going to be saved, I needed to re-locate somewhere else. This put Eric under horrendous pressure. After receiving no help from government agencies, he decided to take the financial risk, re-locate me and try to save my life.

He spent the summer and fall designing a moveable modular home for me, using the information and material choices, learned through the experimental room. Then in December 1994, he rented a commercial building and began construction. He worked 18-hour days every weekend all winter. He would cram in 40 hours of work from Friday evening to Sunday evening.

The whole endeavour was just so labour intensive that there was no way Eric could have the house ready by spray season. In march 1995, I learned that the municipal council fully intended to spray the ball diamond in the spring. One councillor said to me: "Sorry to be crass and cruel but you are just one life in comparison to the safety of all the ball players." Consequently, we decided to take legal action. We sent the council a letter from my doctor for me. This letter was accompanied by a letter from a lawyer stating that his firm would hold the council accountable at law for any harm that would come to me as a result of spraying. This temporarily stopped them. In July 1995, I moved to my modular home on land rented from a couple who own 1200 acres of bush and don't believe in the use of chemical pesticides. The nearest paved road is 20 km away. The air is very pure and it is wonderful! When I moved here I weighed only 70 pounds and am now up to 80 pounds.

At extreme cost to himself, Eric once again saved my life. Thank you, Eric. Thank you, Lord.

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Healthy Homes Take Off Your Shoes

Robin and Audrey Barrett

Think back to your childhood and remember that phrase you heard so often - take off your shoes before you come into the house. Well, you should listen to your mother. One of the more compelling reasons can be found by looking at the massive amount of research that is available on the composition of dust and by looking into where many of the products found in dust originate. Many products come in on shoes or boots from outdoors. One major reason why we should be concerned about this is found in a study which looked at the amount of pesticides found in agricultural areas and then looked at the homes in those same areas. It was found that there was a greater percentage of pesticides in the homes than in the fields where the pesticide was applied.

When evaluating this phenomenon, the logic behind it seemed to be that when a pesticide is used outdoors, nature (sun, rain and micro-organisms) causes it to bio-degrade. If the pesticide is tracked into the homes before it degrades then it will accumulate over time rather than decay. The same thing is happening in most of our neighborhoods when we walk over pesticide-treated lawns and then into our homes without taking off our shoes, therefore contaminating the very area which should be a safe haven from as many pollutants as possible.

Pesticides And Herbicides Higher In Urban Areas

Statistics show that the use of pesticides and herbicides is higher per square foot in urban and suburban areas than it is in agricultural areas. This means that each time you or your family or pets come in from walking around the local community, you have picked up some of the cosmetic chemicals used locally. This can be from walking on a neighbor's lawn or even from walking on the sidewalk or the street where the runoff from your neighbor's lawn has accumulated. These chemical molecules often attach themselves to dust that we track in on our feet and the dust around our homes. If you cannot thoroughly clean your flooring (if you have carpet, for example) the levels will accumulate over time. One of the research labs studying pesticides has developed a special vacuum cleaner which will sample carpets and underlay for this dust. The researchers claim that they can identify most of the pesticides used in the home and the immediate vicinity based on the residual left in the carpet and underlay. *In general, what they are saying is that everything used in your home and your neighborhood ends up in your carpet.*

Other Reasons For Concern :

- The chemical residue attached to dust or on the floor is often picked up by your vacuum cleaner. Much of the small dust cannot be filtered by a standard vacuum cleaner and is blown around your home to land on your pillow, chesterfield, kitchen counter, table, etc. - areas where it can be breathed in as dust or surfaces from which you will be eating and where you will ingest it. This dust also lands on your heating system, where high temperatures will cause the chemicals to evaporate and be released into the air you breathe.

- Adults are not usually near the floor where most of the chemical residues would build up. Infants and small children however, spend more time on the floor and therefore are in more intimate contact with any pesticides accumulated in the home.

Lawn and garden chemicals are not the only areas of concern in terms of things you can track into your home on your shoes which can cause health problems for you

and your family. Similar findings have been noted for lead near major traffic areas (as a remnant from lead gasoline), or near old houses where leaded paint was scraped and allowed to fall on the ground. We also find the same thing with fungus or mold spores tracked in from outdoors on people's footwear. These spores will then take advantage of any moist areas in the household to grow and spread.

The remaining question is what to do:

- Use a good walk-off mat both outside and immediately inside your door, something which is very easy to remove and thoroughly clean.
- Make sure everyone removes outdoor footwear as soon as they enter your home.
- Use solid surface flooring wherever possible. If you must have carpeting, use area rugs that can be removed and thoroughly cleaned.
- Clean effectively. Many pesticides require specific chemicals to remove them. Also, when vacuuming, ensure that you have a vacuum which has adequate filtration capable of removing the pesticides or a central vacuum cleaner exhausting to the outside. This vacuum should not be exhausting to areas where children will be playing, such as in a sandbox. Finally, clean the heating surfaces regularly, but particularly prior to the heating season in the fall. Make sure the floor is clean over an in-floor heating system and have a good quality air filter on forced air systems.
- Don't use cosmetic chemicals on your yard, and encourage neighbors and the municipality to use integrated pest control systems focusing on organic lawn treatments.

Many people have spent a great deal of time and money making modifications to their homes to improve the air quality. This is great, and a necessity in many cases, but the easiest and most cost effective way we have found to make an improvement is to simply *Take Off Your Shoes*.

It is a lot better for everyone's health.

Robin Barret has been involved in helping people create healthier housing since 1980. Audrey Barret is a registered nurse with a special interest in Environmental Health.

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VOTING AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

8.06 Voting of Members - Each member of and in good standing with the National Association twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual General Meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote by person or by proxy. In the event of vote by proxy, refer to clause 8.07 Proxy Voting Form.

8.07 Proxy Voting Form - Any member of the National Association who is entitled to a vote at a meeting of the general membership may vote by means of a proxy. The member may vote by proxy using the Proxy Voting Form and appointing another person as proxy. The person the member appoints as Proxy need not be a member, but before voting shall produce and deposit with the Corporate Secretary sufficient appointment in writing from his or her constituent or constituents. The Proxy shall be valid for a period not exceeding eleven (11) months from the date contained on the Proxy Voting Form. The form of proxy to be used shall be as follows: (see below). Lack of conformity with the Proxy Voting Form shall not invalidate the Proxy so long as the information provided is the same. The Board of Directors decision shall be final regarding validity of Proxy votes.

✂ - - -

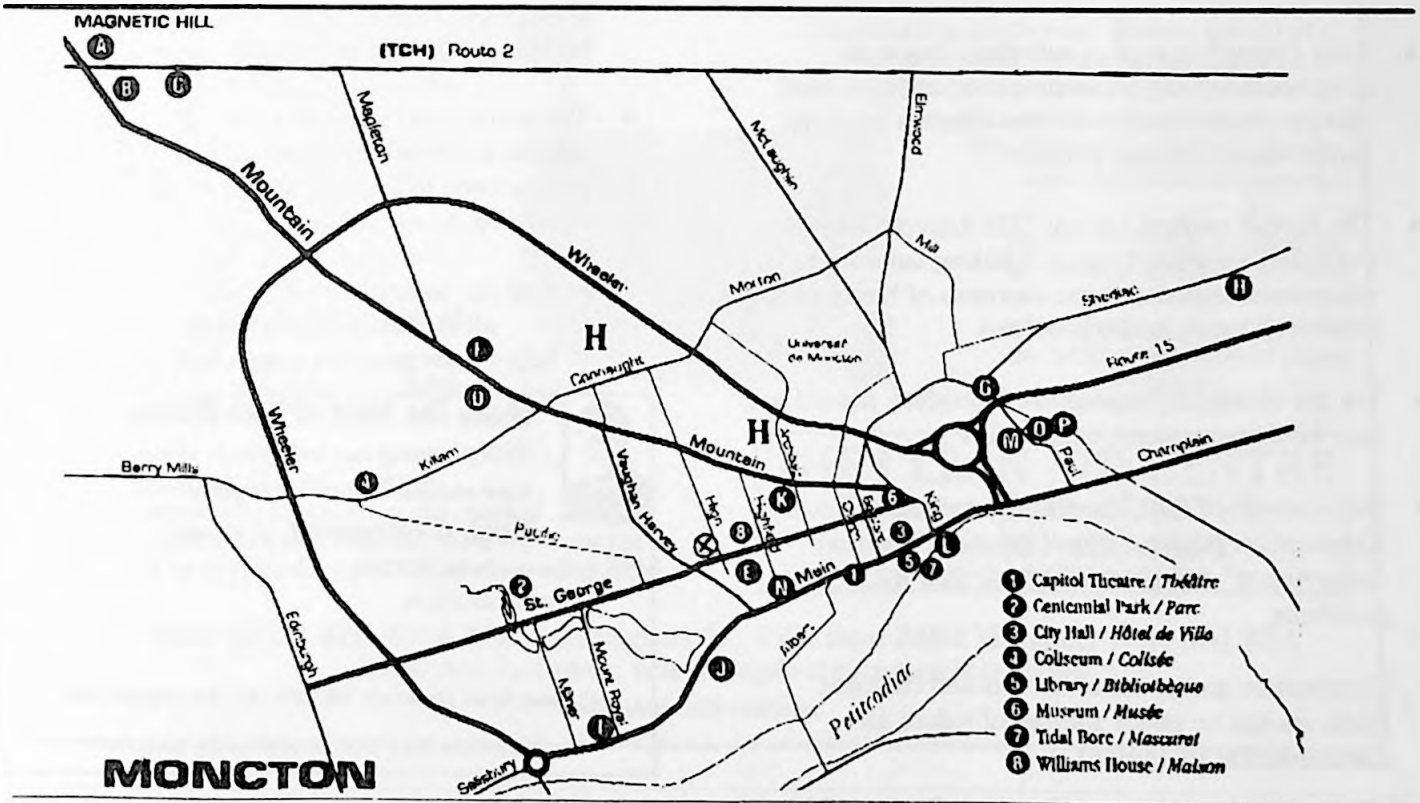
Agenda for Conference

Friday June 6

2:00 - 5:00	Registration And Annual General Meeting
6:00 - 7:00	Registration
7:00 - 7:30	Official Opening
7:30 - 8:30	Topic: Chemical Sensitivities, Allergies Speaker **Dr. Brian Reid**
8:30 - 9:00	Questions Answered By Dr. Reid
9:00 - 9:15	*Health Break*
9:30 - 10:00	**Peter Ford**
10:00	Closing For The Day

Saturday June 7

8:00 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:30	Health And Compensation Speaker, **Lee O'Blenis**
9:30 - 10:00	Questions Answered By Lee O'Blenis
10:00 - 10:30	*Health Break*
10:30 - 11:30	Your Rights In The Workplace. Speaker **Robert Basque**, Lawyer
11:30 - 12:00	Questions Answered By Robert Basque
12:00 - 1:30	*Health Break*
1:30 - 2:30	Topic: Clean Air, Clean Water And Food, Speaker **Dr. Gerald Ross**
2:30 - 3:30	*Health Break*
3:30 - 4:00	Closing Speaker
4:00	Closing Ceremonies
7:00 - 10:00	Executive Meeting



**** WARNING *****

Piped Methane Gas May Be Harmful To Your Health

by David Wimberly

The Allergy and Environmental Health Association Nova Scotia and partners are official registered interveners in the Sable Gas Project because we have evidence that natural gas is the single largest contributor to environmentally induced illness/chemical sensitivity where it is piped. And it is a significant contributor to asthma and allergy.

With our already shockingly high rates in NS of environmentally induced illness/ chemical sensitivity, it is logical to expect we could have some of the worst experiences ever if natural gas is added to the toxic loads our immune systems and indocrine systems are already trying to deal with. We know that avoidance of new exposures to harmful chemicals is far better than tryingto undo the effects later. It is quite surprising to most to find out just how harmful piped natural gas is, but I am being astonished at the amount of documentation on this.

Here are a few headliners that point out some of the problems with piped natural gas. We are working these into our literature, where they will be provided with references. Our web page will provide you with references.

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

- Piped gas is the most important source of indoor air pollution responsible for generating environmentally induced illness, surpassing even pesticides or passive tobacco smoke.
- Piped "natural" gas is a pollutant chemical that can worsen both classical allergy and chemical sensitivity.
- Even *living* in an area with piped gas in the neighbourhood can undermine ones' ability to treat allergies, sensitivities and other illnesses involving compromised immune systems.
- The British medical journal *The Lancet* recently published significant research linking natural gas usage to increased asthma, shortness of breath and other respiratory health problems.
- For the chemically susceptible individual, natural gas may be the very worst form of fuel.
- Publications of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation classify natural gas as a "chemical contaminant" and place it high on their list of problems.
- Combustion gases, unburned fuel and chemical additives can be major sources of indoor air contamination (pollution).
- Natural gas sold to customers typically contains NORMs (Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials, including radon), BTEX (Benzene Toluene Ethylene Xylene) and other contaminants. These are not eliminated in home consumption, can react with other materials in numerous ways, are readily spread, and are extremely dangerous.
- One of the great environmental myths of the century is that piped methane ("natural") gas is safe, free of harmful health effects and environmentally friendly.
- The hidden costs of piped methane gas may well be substantial, even staggering, to health care, to the environment, to learning and productivity, to general well-being, to our future.

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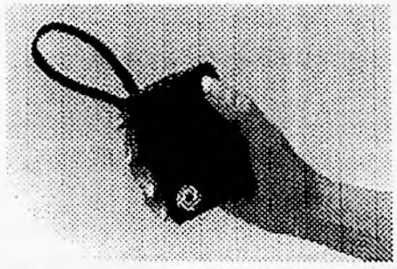

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Cover Story

The Case Against Pesticides

By Michael P. Milburn, PhD

There is a simple truth about pesticides: we don't need them -- at least not the overwhelming majority of the tons of pounds of toxic substances used every year.

Since the majority of pesticides are not needed, it is futile to waste useful energy in the debate over safety. Chemical insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, nematocides and other assorted -cides are all inimical to health, and here there is no debate. The issue is one of risk: how big are the risks for a given chemical and are the risks worth the benefits?

This is just too complicated a question for science to ever satisfactorily answer, and something that involves value judgements over which a consensus will never emerge.

When people debate the risks of chemical pesticides -- substances that are sprayed on lawns and used to douse fruits and vegetables -- they usually argue over cancer. But there are other concerns, including newly raised questions about the ability of synthetic chemicals to mimic hormones and the fact the some individuals exhibit sensitivities to these all-too-ubiquitous substances.

The overwhelming majority of pesticides serve no useful purpose. One popular use for pesticides is in the "care" of lawns. Lawn "care" means killing plants like the beautiful and nutritious dandelion. There is much irony in the fact that the dandelion is quite edible, healthier in fact than a lot of supermarket food. The solution lies in a realistic and ecological ideal for suburban landscaping that centers on the use of native species -- and the emergence of a nouveau dandelion cuisine. (If people didn't like picking, washing, and preparing the plants in their yard, the same people who are now hired at expense to broadcast anti-dandelion chemicals could be employed to do the job.)

The Search for Perfect Carrots

While lawn "care" chemicals could be completely eliminated at a saving and with an increase in quality of life (after eating all those dandelions we would be a lot healthier), the same thing can be said about many farm chemicals. Many pounds of chemicals are used for purely cosmetic purposes. And here it is consumers and not farmers that are largely to blame. For some unknown reason, people have come to associate perfect looking fruits and vegetables with quality. A farmer in Cape Breton could not sell his carrots to supermarkets because they were characteristically crooked when grown in rocky Cape Breton soil. People who shop in supermarkets, it seems, just won't buy crooked carrots. A student at the University of Waterloo generated a major crisis when served broccoli containing a single caterpillar at the school's cafeteria.

Caterpillars vs. Chemicals

The price for perfect-looking food is paid in higher costs and in the consumption of dyes, waxes, and of course pesticides. While nobody wants to eat broccoli that is literally crawling with caterpillars, the idea that broccoli without even a single, solitary bug is possible and desirable is indicative of how far we have strayed into virtual reality. Personally, I am happy to trade a daily cocktail of chemical toxins for a couple of caterpillars. Perhaps the problem lies in the fact that you can see the wriggling caterpillar while the chemical residues in the broccoli remain invisible (out of sight, out of mind) to all but the most sophisticated analytic instruments. Again, the irony is that eating a few caterpillars is likely quite good for your health and yet, while complaints about caterpillar-laden broccoli are taken seriously, complaints about pesticide-laden broccoli are dismissed as irrational.

I don't have the exact numbers at hand, but eliminating cosmetic chemicals from agriculture -- along with those chemicals used for lawn "care" -- would surely take a big chunk away from the tons of chemicals dumped into the environment every year and save people from major sources of exposure. But there is no reason to stop there since the majority of the remaining pesticide use could also be eliminated.

Pesticides are still used to kill pests like mosquitoes, despite the futility of the effort. Mosquitoes are smarter than we are and simply evolve a resistance to chemical bug killers. The fact is, as much as it seems appealing to rid the planet of small, drive-you-crazy insects, we are going to have to learn to live with them and develop effective non-chemical coping strategies. We can, for example, build bat hotels (or purchase them at the local hardware store) to encourage large populations of bats which eat enormous numbers of bugs. (But here again hysteria reigns, for the emotional reaction to a caterpillar in a broccoli head can't compare to the cacophony of a congregation with bats in the belfry.)

The contrast between modern chemical agriculture and modern organic agriculture shows that the majority of agricultural pesticides can be eliminated. Organic farmers do use a variety of natural substances -- like rotenone, an insecticide derived from the root of a tropical plant -- but strive to minimize their use through prevention. Chemical farmers, on the other hand, use highly toxic chemicals routinely on a prophylactic basis.

Famers Need to Innovate

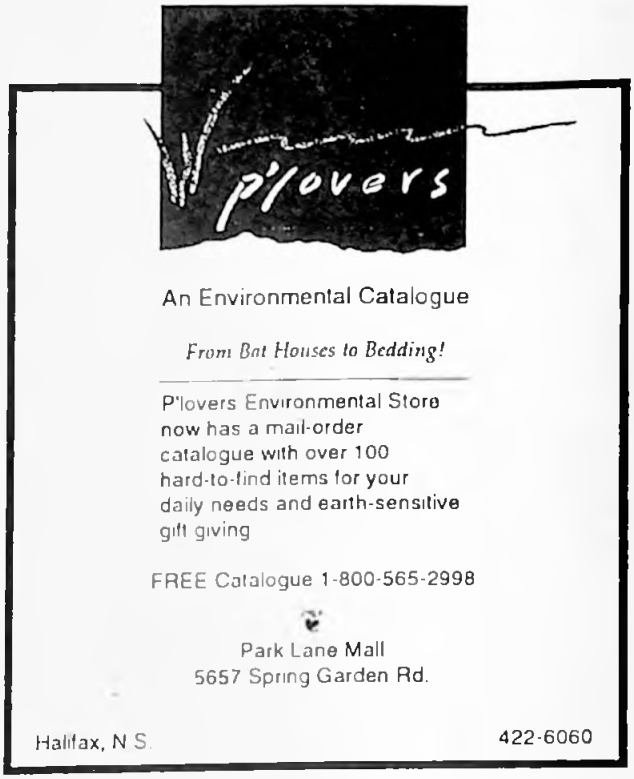
In talking to farmers over the years, I have detected a significant reality gap over the need for farm chemicals. One chemical farmer told me that without chemicals people would starve and that I would never be able to afford his food if he grew it without chemicals. In contrast, organic farmers have told me that, while it takes more knowledge to farm without chemicals, organic agriculture is not pie in the sky, it is pie on the plate. One, a grain farmer, avoided the need for herbicides with innovative management techniques and didn't have problems with insects. Another -- an organic vegetable grower who did make infrequent use of natural insecticides allowed

under organic certification rules -- pointed to the plethora of toads, killdeer, praying mantis, and ladybird beetles that roamed throughout his rows of vegetables, forming an effective part of his pest control strategy.

The biggest hinderance to the elimination of pesticides is that of attitude. When people hate dandelions and are willing to spray chemicals over their property in the drive for social conformity, the problem is not so much pesticides as the twisted ideal of landscaping that infects the suburbs. When neuroses about caterpillars are offered social support, pesticide sensitivity is ignored and an anti-pesticide attitude is considered anti-social, there is little hope for a pesticide-free future.

Fortunately, though, the winds of change are blowing. Natural approaches to home gardening and landscaping are becoming more popular. Remarkable individuals and groups are working to raise awareness of the pesticide issue. Organic food is spreading beyond the tree-hugging, birkenstock crowd to the suburbs. Pioneering farmers are successfully growing food without chemical support. A pesticide-free future may well be on the hazy horizon.

Michael P. Milburn lives in Waterloo, Ontario where he is a pariah in a pro-pesticide neighbourhood. He writes on science, the environment and health and is co-author of Electromagnetic Fields and Your Health (New Star Books). He can be reached via email at 103362.3404@compuserve.com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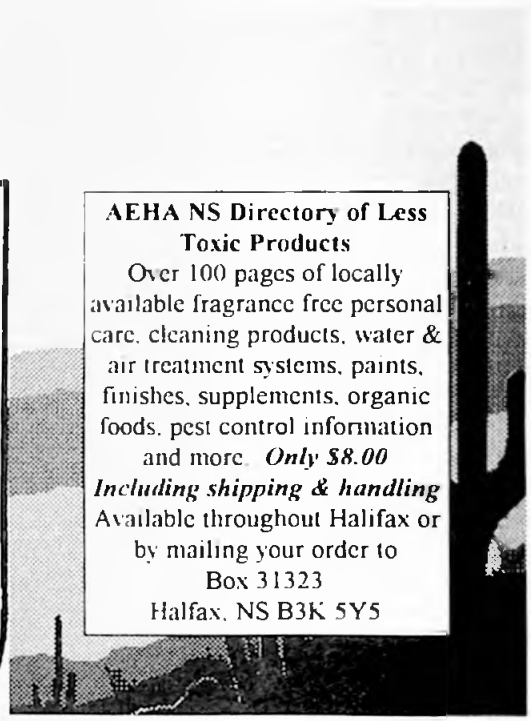
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Pesticides or Us

Katharine Auslander, M.E.S.

One of the major precipitating causes of environmental sensitivity seems to be exposure to a heavy dose of pesticides. This can cause a breakdown in the immune system. The sufferer reacts to an ever increasing number of foods (usually favorite foods) and petrochemicals such as plastics, fragrances, natural gas, heating oil and other pesticides.

This has reportedly happened when pest control officers have used too high a dose in spraying for termites or cockroaches; when people have been in a field sprayed by planes or near a highway when pesticides were applied to the roadside.

Pat Woolchok believes her sensitivities started in the 1950's when she frequently applied DDT to cupboards and carpets to keep insects away. By the 1970's she had developed a noticeable nonstop tremble. She was a teacher but eventually the time came when she could no longer stand up in the classroom. She discovered that she had to eliminate a number of foods to which she had become sensitive and rotate the remaining foods. She had to give away sheets, clothes and furniture to which she reacted. She has healed considerably in the last nine years but she still becomes violently ill when the neighbors spray with pesticides. She experiences nausea, inability to move and "feels like a zombie."

Pesticides are poisons and can cause damage to skin, eyes, immune system and internal organs.

Pesticides are not really safe for any of us. Pesticides are poisons and can cause damage to skin, eyes, immune system and internal organs. The damage can be both cumulative and acute. Pesticides can remain stored in fat cells and lymph glands for decades and health problems can build up over a long period of time. Some pesticides can effect the neurotransmitters in the brain immediately and this can result in vision problems, headaches, decreased reflexes, paralysis and rigidity.

Common contacts with pesticides include: no pest strips, insect sprays, moth balls, moth proofed blankets and rugs (dry cleaners often do this automatically), treated wood (decks and foundations), non-organic food, imported fabrics, paints, varnishes, wood preservatives, and lawn sprays.

In the US, seventy million pounds of lawn pesticides are applied annually. In some states, the department of agriculture maintains a list of people who are pesticide-sensitive. Professional pesticide applicators are obliged to notify people on the list before spraying lawns or residences in their area. Unfortunately, some Pest Control Associations have begun a legal challenge on whether such a medical condition really exists.

Betty Napier, a pesticide-sensitive nurse in Florida, has been so challenged. "Even a passing encounter with a common bug spray affects her as if she has walked through a cloud of nerve gas, causing muscle spasms, nausea, disorientation. If the wind is right, traces of malathion sprayed on a country club four miles away can drift to her home and turn her into a groggy, stumbling wreck."

Don Black could not find such a pesticide registry in Toronto, but he knew he had to set up a system where he was notified. His wife was very sensitive to pesticides... so sensitive that she had fainted after lawn spray applications on her neighbor's property. Don contacted the manager of each of the six pesticide companies that sprayed within four blocks of their house. Don told them of his wife's reactions and negotiated with each company so that they would be done at the same time. These negotiations were fairly complicated as each home is sprayed about 5 to 8 times each season. He found that it was important to reconfirm the dates just prior to spraying. it took two years before this plan ran worked but it has continued to run smoothly for six years.

Don's wife, Carolyn, died in 1995, but not before she made a significant contribution to the use of pesticides in Toronto. Carolyn and Don were part of the Pesticide Action League and they worked to decrease the amount of

spraying in schools and parks. They made presentations to city officials and even picketed parks to prevent spraying. THEY GOT RESULTS! The Metro Toronto Parks claim that they only use 2% of the pesticides they used 6 or 7 years ago. They spray about once a year. The City of Toronto and North York Catholic School Boards stopped spraying within a week of their presentation. Unfortunately, they could not influence the malls which continue to spray regularly once or twice a week.

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Katharine Auslander has a Masters of Environmental Studies. She is also a freelance writer in the area of environmental health. Katharine was an editor for the Allergy and Environmental Health Association's Quarterly publication for three years.

NEXT ISSUE

Join us as we look at **Alternate Therapies**

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Herbal Health

by Lorna VanderHaeghe

Why Are We Still Searching For The Cure?

Most people believe that degenerative diseases are a natural result of aging and live in fear of the "dreaded" diagnosis. Fortunately, a traditional native healing formula used to treat chronic diseases for centuries has been preserved and is available today because of a caring healer, Rene Caisse.

Working as a nurse in Ontario in the early 1920s, Rene met a woman with a strangely scarred breast. On investigation she discovered that thirty years earlier this woman had developed a hardened mass in her breast while she and her husband, a prospector, were living near the Ojibway Indians in Ontario. A medical diagnosis had confirmed her worst fears. The Ojibway medicine man offered her a herbal drink to purify and balance her body. He taught her how to make it and she drank it twice daily. In time her body healed completely. While the woman spoke, Rene recorded the recipe for this healing drink.

Rene used this remedy successfully on her aunt and as knowledge of its effectiveness spread, thousands sought her out. She named the remedy Essiac, her name spelled backwards. Rene treated patients for many years while she struggled to get Essiac recognized as a valid medicine. Eventually she teamed up with Dr. Charles Brusch, personal physician to President John F. Kennedy and together they further developed and expanded the formula. After Rene's death Dr. Brusch continued her work. Elaine Alexander, a radio broadcaster who interviewed many of Rene's old patients as well as Dr. Brusch, was chosen to carry on the tradition. He legally passed over the formula to Elaine but the demands were too great for her to do it alone. She chose a manufacturer to carefully select the highest quality herbs and produce the remedy. There were many Essiac varieties emerging on the market so to avoid confusion, the final developed and expanded formula was renamed Flor•Essence.

Billions of dollars are spent annually searching for "the cure" yet this simple native healing drink available at health food stores may hold the key to health and longevity.

Lorna VanderHaeghe is a freelance writer and editor. For the last fifteen years she has been researching the connection between nutrition and disease prevention and treatment. She is currently completing her BSc degree for entry into medical school.

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For Environmental Sensitivities

Pesticides In My Home?

Paul Battle, BBEI

They find their way into soil, water, air, crops and are even found in breast milk. So don't be too surprised when I say that they can be found in your home as well. "But I do not use pesticides in my home" is often the response when I inform a home owner that their vacuum bag dust tested positive for pesticides.

The US EPA has stated that 80 to 90% of most peoples exposure is in the air at home. Even if you have never used a pesticide spray or powder in a home that you have owned since it was built, pesticides can almost always be found. So what are the pathways for entry?

Pesticide Pathways

Pesticide use is extremely commonplace in our society and in our homes. The most common pathway of pesticides entering a home is from direct application by the home owner. It is not uncommon for me to be inspecting the home of someone with MCS and find half a dozen pesticide sprays located under cabinets or on shelves in the basement. The typical ant and roach killer sprays that can be bought in our grocery stores! That says a lot about how our society views the hazards of these chemicals if you can buy them in a food store. But then again much of the food in a grocery store is full of chemical additives, so maybe it is a very appropriate place to store compatible materials!

A second pathway is by applications of professional pest control companies to the outside of the home's foundation. Most residential homes have a negative building pressure caused by having airtight windows and exhaust fans in bathrooms, on furnaces, over cooking ranges, etc. This blowing out of air creates a suction on the home. One of the areas that is most porous is the foundation. This suction will then pull gases, water, and chemicals through the basement walls and hence into the air of the building.

Another pathway that is often overlooked is from walking on treated lawns and then tracking the pesticide residue in on our shoes. Many city parks, golf courses, and recreational areas use large amounts of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Even our neighbours may be using pesticides that drift onto our own property.

The Health Issues

An acute or chronic exposure can have very damaging effects on people and animals in your household. Often the pesticides are trapped in carpet dust in a home and hence the effect can be much more dramatic on children and pets who are much closer to the source. These chemicals can be traced in the home years after an application.

Pesticides directly affect the immune system and central nervous system. They can be mutagenic (mutation causing), carcinogenic

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(cancer causing), and teratogenic (birth defect causing). There is little questions as to the serious risk to health that pesticides in our environment create. There is questions as to when our governments will heed the cries of its citizens over the sound of money from the petrochemical industries that lobby to keep the regulations lax.

How Do I Test My Home?

New pesticides come onto the market every day without being adequately tested for their toxicity levels. Only after many people have become ill will a pesticide be pulled from the local market, only to show up again in our food from overseas growers who buy the banned substances.

There have been numerous cases where a home owner has contracted a non-toxic pest control application, only to become ill. After some detective work they find out that the company did not adequately clean out the tank from a previous application the same day.

This poses a problem in the testing of homes for pesticides, because there are so many on the market it is almost impossible to determine what was used. It is easy to screen for the presence of pesticides but that does not help in a legal case where you need to know exactly what was applied. Much detective work needs to precede any lab testing in order to determine exactly what to look for.

Decreasing The Pesticide Load

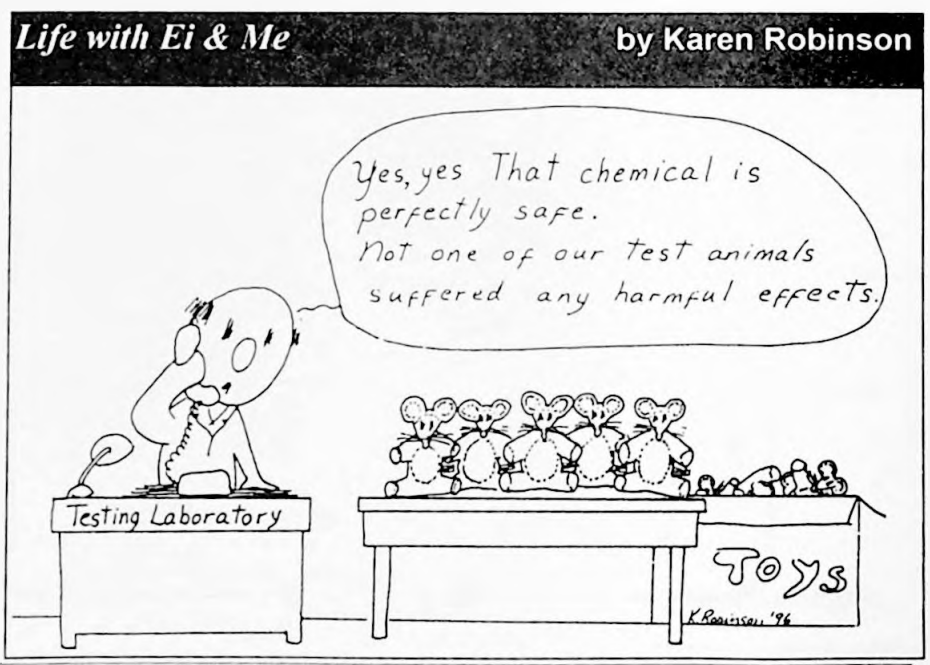
As with all indoor air quality issues, source control is the first line of defense. That means the adage "Think Global - Act Local" holds true for pesticides. The first place to start is in our own homes by eliminating all of the pesticides that we use, realizing that they do get into the air no matter how careful we are with them. Walking our talk, we are now in a position to educate our neighbours and local municipalities on the hazards of pesticides. Citizen groups can then lobby to legislate for pesticide free towns and cities.

Considering the amount of time that pesticides stay around we need to be prudent in eliminating the pathways around our home. The first area that needs to be tackled if you have not already done so is to get rid of those carpets. Yes, another bad rap for that wall to wall broadloom... no matter how much you have your carpet steam cleaned, I can guarantee that a sample sent to the lab would show pesticides still present.

Adopting the European tradition of leaving your shoes at the door and wearing a pair of house slippers is also another good idea. This will decrease the amount that is tracked in from the out of doors. Tacky mats are another way to decrease the amount of chemicals that can be tracked in on our shoes.

Many eradication companies now practice IPM (Integrated Pest Management) practices. This follows a protocol that gathers exact knowledge of the actual infestation present and designs a treatment based on habitat control, food sources, barriers, etc., and does not randomly spray pesticides.

Pesticides break down very slowly and if acute sensitivity is experienced, they must be actively removed. Detergent, water and washing soda are recommended for the organophosphate group of pesticides. There have been applications of bleach and ammonia used in high concentrations to break down the molecular structure of the pesticides in a home. This is not an advisable practice in any home let alone one in which the occupants have Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Some IPM books claim that this option is not effective anyway.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The active removal of the contaminated materials is often the only option available to completely get the offending chemical out of the home. As in any Indoor Air Quality situation the second line of defense is dilution. That is increasing the air exchange rate by bringing more fresh air into the building. The best option to do this in the summer is simply opening up the windows as long as you are assured of no drift issues from neighbours or agriculture. In the winter the use of an ERV unit that exchanges air while extracting the heat has proven to greatly improve the IAQ of a dwelling.

Pesticides will be around for a number of years to come and we should do everything possible to change that situation to protect the health of ourselves, our children and that of the planet. The first place to start is in our own lives, with our own homes. The only language the corporations understand is the fiscal bottom line. Sending the message by organizing boycotts of companies and stores that sell pesticides may prove to have a much quicker response than the hopes of government intervention.

Paul Battle is a certified Bau-Biologie Environmental Inspector. He specializes in the detection of home health hazards relating to IAQ, EMF's, lighting and geopathic stress. He is available for personal consultations and can be reached at Your Health - Your Home. Phone 1-613-549-9148.

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News and Views

Compiled by Daphne Viau-Holland

Peanut Warning

Agriculture Canada is warning consumers with peanut allergies not to eat Yum Nature brand all natural smooth almond butter. The product sold in 500 gram glass jars, contains peanut residue that is not declared on the label. Two product lots are involved: 16 Dec 97 and 09 Jan 98. Both have a universal product code, 5666403105. The product is manufactured in Quebec by Vicrossana Inc.

Daily News, February 1997

The Following Product Has Gone SCENT

Arm and Hammer Super Washing Soda (now "So-clean scent"). Church & Dwight Ltd. Attn: Val Ryan, Consumer Relations Dept., Ste. 500, 1090 Don Mills Road, Don Mills, ON M3C 3R6 or phone 1-416-444-5241

Bon Ami Bathroom & Kitchen Polishing Cleanser (a scouring powder has been discontinued). S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., 1525 Howe St., Racine, Wisconsin, USA 53403-5011 or phone 1-800-558-5566.

Canola Oil

A story about pesticides comes from Toby Maloney in Manitoba. This author criticizes the trend to claim that canola is the healthy oil when in reality it is treated with fungicides, insecticides, and herbicides. Also canola is the first crop in Canada to receive a license for "transgenic" varieties - plants altered with genetic material from other plants or animals. If you aren't put off yet, the refining process uses bleaching and deodorizing to destroy any nutrients. Apparently, this is a crop which is very difficult to grow organically.

National EI Education Campaign A Success

The Environmental Illness Society of Canada is the official sponsors of Canada's National Child Day "EI" Picture Drawing Contest, a national public education program about environmental illness. Eighteen provincial and national prizes were awarded. Children up to eighteen years of age created pictures to demonstrate how pollution affects people and potentially leads to EI.

Top national prizes went to both Ashley Lockyer of Nova Scotia and Stephanie Oliver of Newfoundland who share first place. Ashley depicted sources of pollution children have to face while in school and showed how they adversely affect the body and cause "EI". Stephanie showed how chemical pollution affects our drinking water and poisons the fish we eat. The pictures from both students were very impressive and clearly conveyed their ideas.

Corporate sponsorship for the EI education project was strong. Tibbits Air Corp. which is highly regarded by the EI community for its quality hepa air filtration units, donated the MicroMagic T-101 portable room air filter valued at $600. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation donated their sourcebook publication: *Building Materials for the Environmentally Hypersensitive*. Dr. Doris Rapp donated her book, *The Impossible Child* and Blockbuster Video generously donated $400 in videos, posters and gift certificates. Each child who entered the contest received an award acknowledging his or her participation.

Posters and Christmas cards of the winning pictures will be on sale this fall.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Maintenance Chemicals in Schools

Karen Robinson, B.Sc., B. Ed., B.F.A.

Anyone who has added chlorine bleach to laundry knows that unless one has much air movement/ventilation, or is wearing protective gear, it is virtually impossible to work directly with cleaning chemicals and not breathe in at least some of the fumes. What is less well known is that airborne fumes from many cleaning chemicals can do significant harm to the body. Absorption through the skin is another common route for possibly harmful cleaning chemical exposure. Exposures do not have to be large to affect health - research and experience are showing that low-level exposures can produce measureable effects, and that long-term, low-level exposures can do accumulated harm. **Choosing the least toxic products to begin with is the first step toward prevention of possible harm.** In our schools, at particular risk are the custodians because they work most closely and constantly with cleaning chemicals, and often in tiny janitorial closets that have no ventilation. As for the children, they are at special risk because of their smaller, developing bodies. Researchers at the University of California at Irvine have concluded that children are as much as six times as vulnerable to toxins as are adults.

Floor wax, stripper, urethane floor surfacing, caulks, paints, cleaning solutions, and many other chemically based products contribute to the Total Volatile Organic Compound (TVOC) levels in school air. In this article we will examine, as examples, some of the chemicals contained in the products in use in Halifax schools, and we will also take a look at some alternatives.

Identify Potential Hazards

Regulations require that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) be on location for all WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) controlled products in use. As you may know, MSDSs are prepared by the manufacturer according to government specifications, and their purpose is to communicate important information about products used in the workplace. They may, however provide us with a false sense of security. They are only partially useful for helping to identify potential hazards and for finding less-toxic or least-toxic products. Firstly, ingredients lists are protected information, so only those ingredients that must by law be reported may be on the MSDS. Secondly, standards are set for healthy adult males in the workforce, not women, children, the old, or the ill - and not to mention those individuals who have already developed hypersensitivity to chemicals. Thirdly, many chemicals have not been tested at all. The U.S. FDA receives an average of 50 new chemicals per day to examine and determine if they are safe and suitable for use. It is impossible to adequately test even a fraction of these for carcinogenic, mutagenic, teratogenic, or other hazard. (A teratogen causes birth defects by damaging the fetus.) Many of these are chemicals destined for the cleaning business. Fourth, not everything need be reported on MSDSs. Chemicals that are present in amounts less than 1% need not be listed, and carcinogens below .1% can be exempt. Inactive ingredients such as binders, fragrance, or pigments are not always reportable either. As an example, experts in the industry claim that many liquid hand-soaps contain formaldehyde as the preservative - at less than 1% it need not be reported on MSDSs. Environmental Health Professionals and physicians assert there should be zero tolerance for formaldehyde exposure because of its sensitizing quality. (People sensitized to formaldehyde often develop broad sensitization to multitudes of chemicals and substances unrelated to formaldehyde.) According to the Hazardous Substance List it is also a "CARCINOGEN - HANDLE WITH EXTREME CAUTION".

Take as another example the product Odorgo Room Deodorant. Those concerned about scent-free schools complain of its particular potency, yet the MSDS lists under Ingredients: "NONE".

MSDSs of the products currently being used in our schools list content of many chemicals which would

contribute to TVOC levels. All of those mentioned below are in products in current use in Halifax schools and are also on Hazardous Substance Lists (HSL). The chemical and hazard information below is from the peer-reviewed New Jersey Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet Right to Know Program, New Jersey Department of Health.

Wallglide Graffiti Remover contains *2-Butoxy Ethanol, Acetone, toluene, Isobutane, and Butane/propane*, all chemicals on the HSL.

"*2-Butoxy Ethanol* can effect you when breathed in and by passing through your skin. EXPOSURE MAY CAUSE REPRODUCTIVE DAMAGE. handle with extreme caution. Exposure can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat. Higher exposure can cause you to become dizzy, lightheaded, and to pass out. High or repeated exposure may break down red blood cells, and cause anemia. It may damage the liver and kidneys."

"*Acetone* can affect you when breathed in and by passing through your skin. Exposure to high concentrations can cause you to become dizzy, lightheaded, and to pass out. Contact can irritate the skin. Repeated exposure can cause dryness. Exposure can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat. Acetone is a FLAMMABLE LIQUID and a FIRE HAZARD."

"*Toluene* can effect you when breathed in and by passing through your skin. Toluene may cause mutations. Handle with extreme caution. It may damage the developing fetus. Exposure can irritate the skin nose, throat, and eyes. Higher levels can cause you to feel dizzy, lightheaded, and to pass out. Death can occur. Repeated exposures can damage bone marrow, causing low blood cell count. It can also damage the liver and kidneys. Toluene can cause slowed reflexes, trouble concentrating, and headaches."

The carpet cleaners Solvoil and Solvoil with Citrus contain *Petroleum Distillates*, and *Citrus*.

Petroleum Distillates are also called Naphtha, Petroleum Ether, and Aromatic Solvents. They are used as a herbicide, degreaser, and paint thinner. Health risks include dizziness, lightheadedness, passing out, irritation to the nose, throat, and skin.

"Prolonged contact can cause skin ulcers, severe irritation, and aplastic anemia (destroys blood cells). Chronic exposure will induce symptoms of central nervous system depression, and neurobehavioural disorders." (Dry Clene also contains Petroleum Distillates.)

Cleaners containing *Citrus* can claim to be "natural" - a good marketing tool in today's environmentally aware marketplace. However, D'limonene, a known Sensitizer, is the active ingredient. The US Department of Health reports that D'limonene can be more toxic than Toluene. All Purpose Cleaner also contains D'limonene.

Wallglide and the Urethane, ICI Paints' MSDS057, (used in Halifax gymnasiums) contain *Xylenes* which "can affect you when breathed in and by passing through your skin. Xylenes may damage the developing fetus....can damage bone marrow. Exposure can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat. High levels can cause dizziness, passing out, and death.... can cause problems with memory and concentration." and much more.
This Urethane also contains *Mineral Spirits, Aromatic Naphtha, and Cobalt Octoate*, a suspected carcinogen in humans. All of these are listed on the HSL.
Wallglide also contains Tri*chloroethane* which is a carcinogen, and also can cause headaches, dizziness, and possible liver damage.

Aquaress Liquid Handsoap (not a ServiceMaster product) contains *Ethylene Glycol*, or Antifreeze, which can effect you when breathed in or by passing through the skin. Absorption by the body is higher if Ethylene Glycol is heated or sprayed. (Hands warmed by warm water provide heat) It should be handled as a TERATOGEN–

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WITH EXTREME CAUTION (A teratogen causes birth defects by damaging the fetus). Exposure can cause a 'drunk' feeling, nausea, vomiting, and headache. Higher exposures can cause kidney damage and death. Exposure can cause kidney and liver damage even without other symptoms. It can cause an allergic skin rash. Like most of the ServiceMaster products, Aquaress also has added fragrance.

Glass clene Pro contains *Ammonium Hydroxide* and *Propylene Glycol Monomethyl Ether*.
"*Ammonium Hydroxide* can affect you when breathed in, can severely irritate the nose, throat, and lungs. Death may be caused by suffocation or fluid buildup in the lungs. It is a HIGHLY CORROSIVE CHEMICAL (their capitalization) and can burn the skin and eyes causing permanent damage. Long term exposures at low levels may cause chronic bronchitis."

"*Propylene Glycol Monomethyl Ether* can affect you when breathed in and by passing through the skin. Can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, and throat. Very high levels may cause you to feel dizzy and lightheaded, and even to pass out. Very high levels may cause lung, kidney, and liver damage."

Children are at significantly more risk from toxin exposures than are adults

Other Service Master cleaning products in use in Halifax schools contain substance on the Hazardous Substances List and have similar risks to those listed above. The following are a few examples:
Floorstar BFR (baseboard finish remover) contains *Butane* and *2-Butoxy Ethanol*.
Solvoil contains *Propylene Glycol Monomethyl Ether*.
Floorstar Degreaser II contains *Pyrineglycol n-Butyl Ether*.
Speedball 2000 Power Cleaner (95% volatile) contains *Isopropylamine*.
Bowl Descaler contains *Hydrogen Chloride* (Hydrochloric Acid) which is highly toxic.
Drymop Treatment contains *petroleum oil* (85-95% volatile by weight)
Wallglide contains *Trichloroethane*, a CARCINOGEN.

Virtually all of the cleaning products in use routinely in Halifax schools also have added fragrance, making Scent-Free programs impossible. With hazardous chemicals in daily use, however, Scent-Free, as important as it is, becomes just a small part of the health concern.

Health, Behaviour, and the Ability to Learn:

There is substantial evidence from the National Research Council, the World Health Organization, Environmental Health experts, and others, that children are at significantly more risk from toxin exposures than are adults. Current peer reviewed research is showing, however, that exposures to common airborne household chemicals is potentially harmful to all, not just the young, the small, or the weak. Researchers report changes in cognitive functioning/attention/learning ability, mood/emotion, behaviour, and more. (see references) Airborne chemicals can be especially harmful to those with respiratory conditions, allergies, and related illnesses, and to those who have developed Chemical Hypersensitivity. Some of these studies have been done on low-level mixes of common chemicals found in the indoor air of homes. It may be significant to note that cleaning products in schools tend to be more potent, industrial-strength chemical products. Because of the possible presence of mutagens and teratogens in cleaning products, it makes sense for female custodians and teachers of childbearing age to check out the MSDS sheets of the products used in their schools. (It bears noting, however, that recent research reported in the media has also linked birth defects in offspring to chemical exposures involving fathers.) Most high schools have a few pregnant students, and some high schools have daycares to care for the infants and young children of students. Caution is warranted because of newer evidence that daily long-term exposures to low levels of harmful materials may cause previously unrecognized health impacts.

So far we have only looked at single chemicals and the health effects that research has found can result from exposure. Random mixes of chemicals from several sources (for example, the photocopy fumes, a perfume, the Room Deodorant, and fresh floor wax all in the same room) mingle in the air and form unknown chemicals with unknown effects. These chemical "soups" further complicate the overall issue of low-level chemical exposures. Several chemicals, each at a low level, can combine to make a soup with a combined TVOC level that can be of significant health impact. Imagine, a combination that makes an entirely new and unpredictable chemical -an unknown chemical with unknown health effects and at a significant TVOC level.

We also have said little so far about those who have developed Chemical Hypersensitivity. Many of these were healthy people who were made ill by environmental contaminants such as chemical soups, or long term low-level exposure to one or more contaminants (for example, a custodian who cleans with ammonia every day), or from single toxic doses such as accidental pesticide poisoning. These people can be made ill in often profound and unexpected ways by even extremely low level exposures to chemicals. For children and staff like this, going to school poses a sometimes impossible obstacle. Their disability makes scent-free/less-toxic schools a must. Most of this article, however, has been aimed at keeping healthy people healthy by limiting the toxins in schools.

The New Jersey Department of Health HSL has a question and answer section as follows:

Q: *If I have acute health effects, will I later get chronic health effects?*
A: Not always. Most chronic (long term) effects result from repeated exposures to a chemical.

Q: *Can I get long-term effects without ever having short-term effects?*
A: Yes, because long term effects can occur from repeated exposures to a chemical at levels not high enough to make you immediately sick.

Q: *What are my chances of getting sick when I have been exposed to chemicals?*
A: The likelihood of becoming sick from chemicals is increased as the amount of exposure increases. This is determined by the length of time and the amount of material to which someone is exposed.

Q: *When are higher exposures more likely?*
A: Conditions which increase risk of exposure include dust releasing operations, (grinding, mixing, blasting,dumping, etc.) other physical and mechanical processes (heating, pouring, spraying, spills, and evaporation from large surface areas such as open containers), and "confined space" exposures (working inside vats, reactors, boilers, small rooms, etc.).

Q: *Is the risk of getting sick higher for workers than for community residents?*
A: Yes. Exposures in the community, except possibly in cases of fires or spills, are usually much lower than those found in the workplace. However, people in the community may be exposed to contaminated water as well as to chemicals in the air over long periods. Because of this, and because of exposure of children or people who are already ill, community exposures may cause health problems."

Alternatives

Is it possible to get the job done well without using such toxic chemicals? Yes, it is. Finding truly non-toxic solutions for some needs is impossible, so choosing Least-Toxic alternatives becomes the goal. For example, disinfectants are registered with government as pesticides, designed to kill living organisms. (Wilkenfeld, I.R. Prescription Environments. 1994.) The Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta found normal scrubbing to be as effective as disinfectants. Scrubbing, however takes a bit more time and effort. Additional research was conducted for one year in a U.S. hospital where the commercially available disinfectant was compared to a mixture of borax and hot water. The monitoring bacteriologist reported that borax satisfied all the hospital's germicidal requirements. (Dadd, The Nontoxic Home and Office, p.22) Dr. Doris Rapp, physician, allergist, and Environmental Health Specialist suggests a 3% solution of Hydrogen Peroxide as a safer alternate disinfectant. (Healthy School Handbook)

Some companies are responding to the need for safer cleaning products by formulating commercially available and effective, less toxic alternatives. There are many Scent-Free lines available and others that claim to be "natural" or "environmentally Safe". BUT BEWARE. Care in choosing must be exercised even with these products, and for several reasons. "Natural" is not always safer - many natural materials are naturally toxic (methane gas, poisonous plants, uranium,...), and some man-made chemicals can be less toxic than some natural substances (citrus). Some "natural" cleaners also have added natural fragrance that can be as potent as chemically added fragrance. Beware as well of "Scent-free" products. A cleaner containing toxic substances would still be toxic even if the fragrance were removed. To further complicate the issue, some scent-free products can be more toxic because the scent is covered by a masking chemical(s). As for "Environmentally Safe" claims, try this example: pesticides making such claims may protect Mother Earth by breaking down relatively

quickly, but before they do so they are very effective killers.

I thought it would be interesting to compare MSDSs of the cleaning products in use in our schools to those used in our local hospital system and to Allerjan products, a locally available line of less-toxic commercial janitorial products. My comments are not to be seen as endorsements, but my general conclusions are that the hospital line is less toxic than the school line, and Allerjan is less toxic than both of the others. Some of the hospital products have Ethylene Glycol (highly toxic, risk of brain, liver, and kidney damage), and several other chemicals of concern, such as Petroleum Distillates, Ammonia, and Diethyl Ether, that require caution according to the Hazardous Substance Lists. But, all things considered, they seem to be a good step in the right direction. Allerjan products contain few chemicals on the Hazardous Substance Lists, and no phosphates, preservatives, dyes, perfumes, or petroleum solvents. Although their metal cleaner and one of their floor strippers contain Glycol Ether, their other stripper does not. Their all purpose cleaner, Vision, was the first in Canada to be awarded the ECOLogo label. Even the floor wax appears to be less toxic and is being tried in some schools.

There are other comparable "less-toxic" cleaners available such as Shaklee and Nature Clean, and there are safer natural products as well. The Shaklee cleaning products have been around a bit longer than some of the other less toxic lines, and last time I checked were in use at Woods Hole and The Biosphere research facility in Arizona, and on Jacques Cousteau's boats. As part of their renowned Green Program (which saved the company over $200,000.00 in the first year alone) CP Hotels use combinations of baking soda, borax (with caution - do not breathe the powder), and vinegar for much of their cleaning needs. Tougher, although still less-toxic, products are saved for the tougher jobs.

Please note that when you settle on your choice of safer products, keep room for flexibility. Some individuals may have health difficulties that need use of yet another alternative.

I hope I have shown both the importance of, and the possibility of, using less toxic cleaning and maintenance materials in our schools. I also hope school decision makers have seen that the issue is complex - it is unfortunately not as simple as choosing the most effective cleaner at the lowest price. Also, that it takes particular expertise to judge what may be safest. We know so much more now about the impacts of chemicals on the body. Dr. Dick Irwin, toxicologist at Texas A&M Universities states, "Chemicals have replaced bacteria and viruses as the main threat to health. The diseases we're beginning to see as the major causes of death in the latter part of this century...are diseases of chemical origin."

Perhaps we should cleanup our schools by cleaning up the cleaning materials first!

I hope this article helps your school take another important step toward providing a clean and safe place for your children to spend their days.

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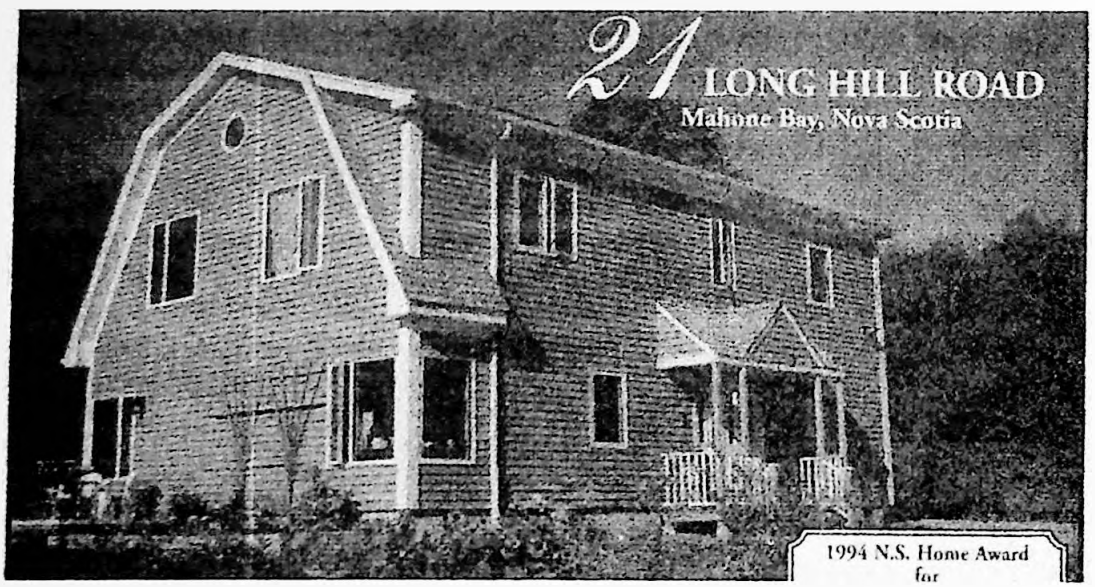

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TIPS AND NEWS:

Among the most toxic chemicals used in schools are the pesticides for pest control. Integrated Pest Management programs are in place in many school districts in North America. Some are State legislated. The Maryland program reports having saved $32,000.00 in the first year alone. Imagine, saving money while saving human health. The goal is to use non-toxic and less-toxic alternatives to pesticides, and to resort to pesticides only when all else fails, only when necessary, and only with strict safety precautions. Cosmetic lawn pesticides pose a further risk to children as they walk to and from school. Consider supporting efforts to ban the use of lawn pesticides in your community/town/city.

Watch for the 1996 ASHRAE IAQ Standards. If they are passed as written, and accepted by the Labour Departments of Canadian provinces, we will see much that was proposed in Nova Scotia's Indoor Air Quality Regulations be put into place by the more powerful ASHRAE standards. This is very good news for those who are striving to prevent others from becoming ill from building-environment-induced illnesses.

There is an excellent new publication from The Cutter Information Corporation called Indoor Air Quality in Schools. It is by Dr. Dagmar Schmidt Etkin and Carlton Vogt, and includes research and technical information relevant to school IAQ, as well as practical information for all levels of school administration, classroom and specialist teachers. (37 Broadway, Suite 1, Arlington, MA 02174-5552, Tel. 617-641-5118, Web site: http://www.cutter.com)

REQUEST of TEACHERS - It would be helpful to compile a list of alternative products for use by teachers. (Has anyone already done this?) Would you compile a list of the products you use in your workday? We can then seek less toxic alternatives from across the country. Examples might be: the cooking class teacher's need for a tea towel cleaner and disinfectant, the teacher's need for either a chalk board cleaner or a white board cleaner, the art teacher's need for less toxic art supplies... A list of unsolved needs would be a starting point for finding solutions. Please also send your solutions.

A substitute for liquid whiteout that seems acceptable so far is DRYLINE. It comes in a dry tape dispenser, is easily applied, and is available at office supply outlets.

It might be helpful for other areas of Canada to know some of what is happening in Nova Scotia:

The good news is, improvements are happening on most levels. The not-so-good news is we have much work to do to ensure progress continues to upgrade school Environmental Health and Safety. **Remember we have both a new minister and new amalgamated school boards. Please send new letters or revise and resend letters you wrote in the past** to your school board and The Honourable R. Harrison, Minister of Education and Culture, Box 578 Halifax, B3J 2S9. (Please send a copy to Citizens for A Safe Learning Environment (CASLE), 287 Lacewood Drive, Unit 103, Suite 178, Halifax, B3M 3Y7.)

In January CASLE made a presentation to five government departments. Changes are needed on all levels, but the purpose was to encourage the departments to work within their mandates to find ways of improving school Environmental Health conditions. Several suggestions being followed up include the idea of establishing an interdepartmental library for school related environmental health and safety information and to possibly require certification of all contractors and sub contractors who plan to do work in schools. More good news: The Interdepartmental Indoor Air Quality Committee of 1994 has been reactivated. The overall sense is that the will to make changes at the Provincial level is there. CASLE is a registered non-profit volunteer organization based in Nova Scotia, and in liason with the AEHA. It has a package of extensive information, available at cost, for $5.00. To become a contributing member and to be added to their mailing list please send an extra minimum donation of $2.00. A larger donation would be gratefully accepted.

In the Halifax Regional Municipality the hiring process for maintenance of the amalgamated schools has begun. One tragic result of hiring companies based on the promise of low costs comes from possible corner-cutting of health and safety precautions. Costs are still paid, but they are hidden costs to the children's and staff's health. **It is essential to convince school boards that such false economy is unwise. A company that already has a good track record in Environmental Health and Safety must be hired.** To take the thought further, it may be preferable to have a school board employed management team rather than to hire outside "experts". Our recent experiences in Halifax supports the advice given in The Healthy School Handbook that partnerships between business and public concerns do not work well when it comes to school maintenance. It seems better to have managers whose job it is to serve the school community rather than managers who have loyalty to a business and its profits. Please write or talk to your board member NOW about your concerns. (Under Labour Law the school board is ultimately liable for any harm)

Halifax Regional's new amalgamated administrative staff are continuing to upgrade school Environmental Health and Safety. Policies and protocols are being written now. For example, a policy on Life-Threatening Allergies has just been written. Coming next is a policy on Scent-Free schools. Expected soon are policies on carpeting, maintenance procedures, and general safety issues. It would be good to write letters expressing both encouragement of their hard work and also expressing your wishes regarding contents of the policies. School boards in other parts of the country may want to request copies of the policies to help with their own policy making.

Department of Labour standards are generally designed with healthy, working adults in mind, not children or the ill, aged, or pregnant. **By January 1, 1998, safety manuals are required to be written for all workplaces. It is essential that these manuals for schools be written to provide safety for more vulnerable members of society, especially children.**

PLEASE REQUEST THIS OF YOUR BOARD MEMBERS AND THE MINISTERS OF LABOUR AND EDUCATION.

US EPA booklet called *Pest Control in the School* is a must have. It gives information on policy writing and program information. Write to: Public Information Centre, US EPA, 401 M Street, Washington, DC 20460 USA.

It is important to recognize the progress being made. The will to make changes, and the opportunity to make them is in Nova Scotia now. However, there has perhaps **never been a more important time to write to officials to both encourage progress and to ensure they do what you believe is needed.**

In the future I hope to write a more detail article about the "pockets" of progress across Canada, including Nova Scotia's efforts, Waterloo's ECO classrooms and others. Please send me news of your area for inclusion.

Until next time....

Karen Robinson

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The Country:	Canada
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The Persecutors:	Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons (COPS)
The Intent:	To revoke medical licenses and/or prevent physicians from offering complementary therapies to patients
The Defence Team:	You, me, and other citizens concerned about our right to choose

Act I - The Charges

Escorted by armed police officers, the Quebec College of Physicians and Surgeons raided a naturopathic clinic.
"Dr. Josee Rancourt, you are charged with using natural treatments with your patients and you are to immediately withdraw the foreword you wrote for the alternative cancer therapy book, the Bruess Juice Fast."

"Dr. Jerry Green, we charge you for placing far too much emphasis on nutritional counselling."

"Dr. Felix Ravikovich, you are forbidden to use histamine injections for allergy related disorders from this day forward."

"Dr. Josef Krop, you are charged with using the following modalities in your practice:

1. orthomolecular therapy (the use of vitamin and mineral supplements)
2. nutritional counselling and dietary modification
3. environmental control counselling (prescription for clean air, clean water and clean food)
4. diagnosis and treatment of candidiasis (yeast infections)
5. diagnosis and treatment of food, inhalant and chemical sensitivities
6. use of intradermal and sublingual immunotherapies
7. detoxification therapy
8. use of acupuncture and electrodermal screening techniques (vega)."

Note: In Dr. Krop's case, these therapies are *identical* to those offered by a *government financed* environmental clinic situated on the east coast in the *same country* - **our** country - Canada.

Act II- The Cross Examination

Question: Were there any patient complaints?

Answer: Absolutely none. Only *praise* from the thousands of patients who were unable to obtain relief through standard medical practices.

Question: What are the COPS afraid of? That people will actually recover from chronic illnesses in spite of the efforts of all their colleagues who choose to practice only orthodox medicine?

Answer: Good questions. Fear often translates into persecution.

Question: When were the charges in the Jozef Krop case laid?

Answer: In 1989 - a staggering *eight years* ago! In any court in this land, criminal or civil, these charges would have been dropped. Due process, the right to a fair and expeditious (speedy) trial, has been denied this defendant. Knowing their case is flimsy, the CPSO has resorted to trial by ordeal and harassment. They intend to wear the defendant down physically, spiritually, and economically. In fact, a memorandum from the COPS

Deputy Registrar, Dr. John Carlisle tabled at the December 1995 portion of the hearing stated that "*this (investigation) will be a costly and lengthy process but may be the only way of finally, once and for all, dealing with these clinical ecologists.*"

Who Is Dr. Josef Krop?

Dr. Krop is a leader in the practice of environmental medicine, recognized both by his peers in Ontario as well as internationally. In conjunction with conventional medical therapies, Dr. Krop adds the above-mentioned techniques of Environmental Medicine These are widely used in the USA, the UK, Europe, Australia and China. He is a board member and Fellow of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM), which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary; a Diplomat of the International Board of Environmental Medicine and is founding member of the Canadian Society for Environmental Medicine.

Dr. Doris Rapp, an American medical doctor, and widely acclaimed author of many books about children and environmental sensitivities has known Dr. Krop for fifteen years. She says: "*You will never find a more dedicated, caring, concerned, thoughtful physician in this world. He is the type of doctor that should be emulated, not chastised.*"

Dr. Krop's kindness and compassion have been used as inspiration for a medical detective in a book. Both Dr. Krop and the character relentlessly look for the causes of common chronic health problems, offering many viable solutions to their patients.

How Does The Jozef Krop Case Affect You?

Should Dr. Krop lose this case, you, the consumer will also lose. We are in this together. How so? This case, regardless of the outcome, will set a precedent. If Dr., Krop should lose, it will mean the curtailment of many complementary services. As a result, most physicians who presently use complementary modalities will no longer be able to do so. Ultimately, it means that you, the consumer, will no longer have freedom of choice in healthcare. You will have to take what is given - medication and surgery. you will no longer be able to take responsibility for your own health - especially if you are continually denied therapies that directly influence your health and well-being.

"*In the treatment of the sick person, the physician must be free to use a new diagnostic and therapeutic measure, if in his or her judgment it offers hope of saving life, reestablishing health or alleviating suffering.*" (1989 World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki)

Why Did I Decide To Write This Article?

Eleven years ago, after the birth of my second child, I too, joined the ranks of the chronically ill - chronic fatigue, bowel problems, arthritic pains, daily headaches and incredible sinus problems. Worse than my physical symptoms was the depression, memory loss, irritability and mental confusion . All conventional medicine had to offer was expensive, invasive tests and drugs. Throughout my search, *not once* did anyone mention nutrition or lifestyle - at least, not until I met a physician who had a holistic practice which embraced some basic tenets of environmental medicine. He identified my problems and employed non-toxic therapies to help me. It was in that moment that I began to take responsibility for my health. But to do that, I needed *information* so I could make *intelligent choices* for myself.

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Since that time, I've not only walked my own path toward wellness, but have helped many others embark upon their own journeys. In the process, I've heard it all - dozens of stories - many of them horror stories about people who remained ill for years because they were never told what they needed to know, in order to become well. Admittedly, some omissions were out of ignorance, but far too many were simply denied information by the "experts" - a blatant withholding of truth.

It is the *holistic physician* who will search for the underlying causes of your chronic illness. Discovering the cause is, more often than not, the most important step in finding relief and possibly a cure

Are You A Complacent Canadian?

It seems that we, as Canadians, have come to accept ill health as a normal way of life. Is it our legacy as Canadians to be so complacenet? We are medicated as never before and our children suffer from chronic conditions in epidemic proportions. Thirty years ago, asthma, chronic ear infections, hyperactivity and behavioural problems were the exception; today, they're household words.

Knowledge is power. When you are denied information, you are robbed of your personal power - power over your own body, your own health, indeed, your own life.

How Can You Make A Difference?

"Responsibility for health does not belong to doctors, other health care practitioners, insursance companies, lawyers or the government - It belongs to the individual." Zoltan Rona, MD

So you see, the responsibilkity belongs to you and to me. Only we can effect change and only we can make a difference. I urge you to take that responsibility - today. If not for yourself, do it for your children and their children too. Supporting groups such as *Citizens for Choice in Healthcare* and the *Canadian Coalition for Health Freedom* will ensure your voice will be heard.

I have made a personal decision to donate funds from the sale of *Free to Fly: a journey toward wellness*. For each copy that is ordered directly from the publisher, 10% will be donated to the Jozef Krop fund. To order, please contact: New World Publishing, PO Box 36075 Halifax, NS B3J 3S9 or call 902-466-000, or fax 902-466-0005 or email: nwp@ra.isisnet.com

If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. Get involved. Now.

Judit Rajhathy, B.A., R.N.C.
author

NEXT ISSUE
Join us as we look at
Alternate Therapies

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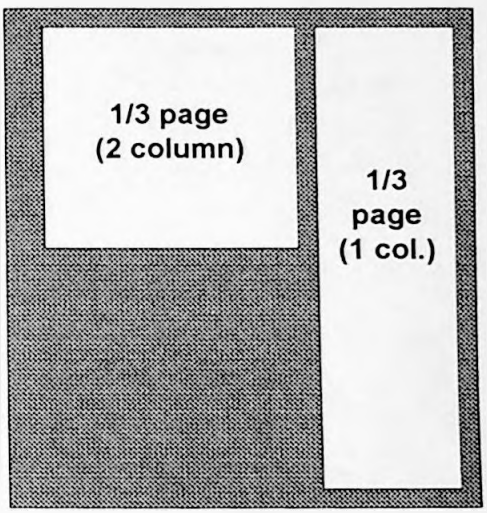

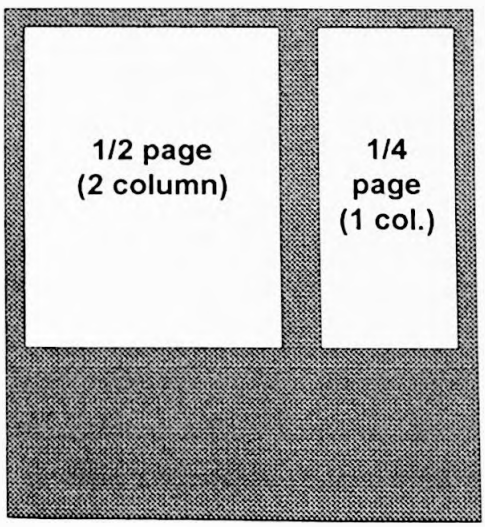

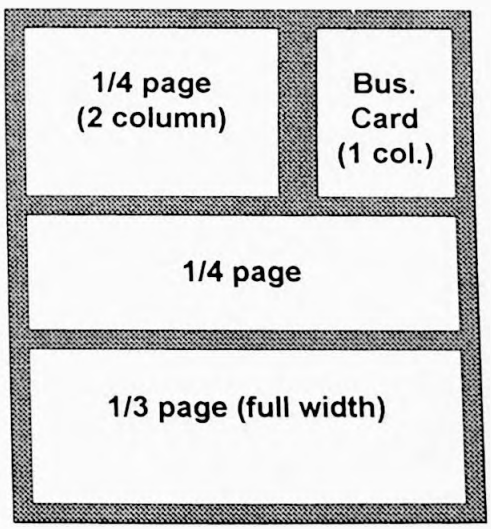

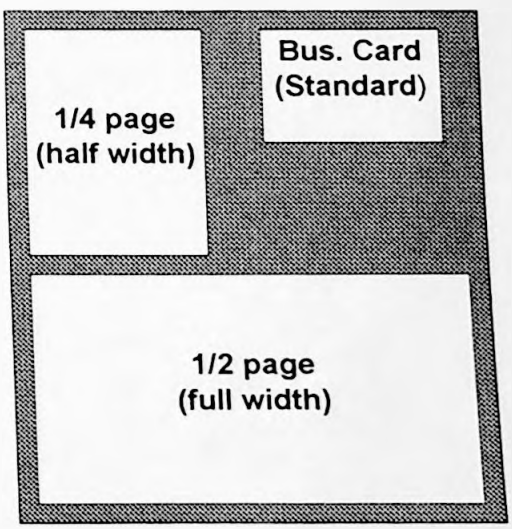

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